

THE
TRIUMPH OF TRUTH;
OR,
MEMOIRS
OF
MR. DE LA VILLETTE.

Translated from the FRENCH
By R. ROBERTS.
IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOL. I.



*Tho' Truth lies often long conceal'd,
Yet trust to Time, she'll be reveal'd.*

1607/4543

B  M

DEDICATION

HER GRACE

THE DUCHESS

OF

DEVONSHIRE.

MADAM,

I Humbly beg your Grace's
Permission to put this little
Book under your Protection; an
honour which I should not
have ventured to aspire to, had
not the Work in the Original
been stored with those Senti-
ments of Virtue and Religion
with

DEDICATION.

with which your Grace's illustrious Ancestors have ever been peculiarly blessed. I flatter myself, it has not suffered by the Translation.

I HOPE I shall not be thought severe, if I say it was difficult, in this light, dissipated Age, to find a Lady of Quality, to whom a Moral Tale might, with Propriety, be addressed: I found it so, till the DUCHESS of DEVONSHIRE was pointed out to me as a Young Lady in whose Mind are centered those many Virtues which concur to adorn her Family;

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mily; and who would not disdain to patronize a Work originally written, and since translated, by a Woman.

WHEN I reflect on your Grace's elevated Situation and Character; as blessed with that Domestic Happiness which is seldom to be found among the Great, and which the Good only can deserve; as possessed of Talents, which not only cast a Lustre on your own Actions, but enable you to judge with Nicety of the Merits of others: and from whose early Virtue
and

DEDICATION.

and high Rank we may expect;
at a more advanced Age, the best
example a Court can receive;
I am emboldened, without fur-
ther Apology, to pay this pub-
lic Testimony of Respect to an
Exalted Character. As such a
Testimony, I hope your Grace
will receive it from the hand of

Your GRACE's

Most Faithful

And Obedient

Humble Servant,

St. Paul's Church-
yard, Jan. 12,
1775.

R. ROBERTS.

THE
TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

IT being customary to prefix an Address to the Public to every Book with which they are presented; either to apologize for the writing of it, to bespeak their good opinion, or give some account why it was written; I shall so far comply with general custom, as to let the World know, this has been translated some years, and was undertaken at the

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request of the late Dr. Hawkesworth ; who recommended it to me as a Novel of that delicate kind which was peculiarly adapted to a Female Writer ; abounding with moral and religious truths ; and being originally written by a Woman justly celebrated among the French Authors, was the more suitable to a Translator of the same Sex.

It was always designed for the press, but accident alone has postponed the publication. I am proud of saying it was, when in manuscript, revised, corrected, and approved by the above-mentioned Author. I should be
happy

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happy if all the future effusions of my pen could have the same sanction: but, alas! this exalted Genius is no more! and the only comfort left to his surviving friends, is the remembrance that they were distinguished by his approbation and friendship. With this distinction few were more highly favoured than myself; and few, very few, have felt equal regret for his death!

WHAT I have to say in favour of this Work, is, that the youthful mind may read for entertainment, and from thence find instruction; which cannot be said in general of those modern books

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of entertainment which usually fall into the hands of youth; where the Libertine, under the seducing name of the Man of Pleasure, is depicted in so pleasing a light, as to encourage that mistaken notion so readily received among young Women, That a reformed Rake makes the best Husband.

BUT let me advise my fair young Readers to avoid, with terror, the rock on which so many have split; nor think that by copying the Heroines, of whose success they so ardently read, they shall be able to make proselytes to Virtue of those to whom Vice

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is become habitual, and who, when they have lost a relish for that, find their feelings too much deadened to become enamoured of Virtue.

If young Ladies look on the Man of Taste and Pleasure as formed to give social happiness in the wedded state, the Rake is very falsely so called. If his amours are of a low kind, disgust must be at least equal to his satisfaction; and by degrees his mind becomes so vitiated, as to be incapable of enjoying an intercourse of a more refined nature. But if refinement is joined with sensuality, and he has a tender connection

nection with an object worthy of it, whom yet for prudential reasons he quits for the more honourable state of Matrimony; can a Lady of a tender, delicate nature find happiness with a man, who either has lost all sense of right or wrong, or whose soul must be frequently torn with remorse for having abandoned to that last degree of wickedness which attends on lost Fame, the woman who had trusted all to his honour, and thought his love a mighty price for ruin?

YET such are in general the Heroes of our Modern Romances; dignified with courage, generosity, and

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and such qualities as are pleasing in the eyes of the other Sex ; which leads them into that fatal delusion of their being the companions of Men of Gallantry : but which are in reality qualities which are very rarely, if ever, to be met with in those Libertine Characters which that name serves to disguise.

BUT it is not my design to give a Dissertation on Modern Romance : All that I shall further add is, That the purport of this little Moral Tale, throughout the whole, seems to be to inculcate every Moral Virtue, to enforce every Religious Tenet. Such
certainly

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certainly was the Author's design
in writing ; such has been mine
in translating it. That it may
answer our joint end is the sin-
cere Wish of

THE EDITOR.

THE TRIUMPH OF TRUTH
~~THE TRIUMPH OF TRUTH~~
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~~THE TRIUMPH OF TRUTH~~
T. H. E.
TRIUMPH OF TRUTH

IN a certain Town of France,
Three young Gentlemen, to
whom the bounty of Fortune had
given large possessions, formed
themselves into a little society of
pleasure, and resolved to indulge
every desire by every means in their
power. They first abandoned them-
selves to whatever might gratify
Vol. I. B their

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their appetites; and as a perversion of the rational faculties is generally the consequence of irregular actions, they immediately endeavoured to doubt of the truth of a Religion, which at once condemned and embittered their pleasures. I knew not with what success Two of these Gentlemen cultivated their incredulity—I speak only of the Third, to whom, as a second cause, I owe my existence, and from whose mouth I learned what I am now about to relate.

MR. De la Villette (for that was my Father's name) laboured a long time to throw off what he called
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the Yoke of Prejudice ; and at length flattered himself that he had succeeded. Intoxicated with pleasures that followed each other in an uninterrupted series, no calm moment intervened, in which he could be restored to himself, or have leisure to attend to that internal voice, by which unassisted Nature proves the existence of an infinitely righteous Being, who must necessarily punish Vice, and reward Virtue. " Whatever is, is the effect of " Chance." This he heard asserted by his associates in debauchery ; This he asserted himself, and imagined that he believed it. But in That, however, he was mistaken ;

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the belief of a God lay, as it were, torpid in his breast, and was sufficiently roused at certain seasons to interrupt that false tranquility, of which he at other times believed himself to be possessed for life.

ONE of his relations, a lady, who lived in the country, engaged him to spend some days at her seat. There lived with this lady a sister of her husband, who, besides uncommon beauty, possessed an elevated genius, a generous mind, and an exemplary piety. These amiable qualities drew upon her the addresses of a great number of admirers; but Emilia was so im-

pressed

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pressed with a sense of the caution necessary in making a choice on which the happiness or misery of life depends, that she had now entered into her thirtieth year, without having been able to determine in favour of any one of her suitors. Some secret sympathy made her wish to find in my father those qualities necessary to her happiness, which she had hitherto sought in vain. Of these she did, indeed, perceive the seeds in the breast of Mr. De la Villette ; but her sagacity, in spite of her affection, discovered that it would cost her much labour and address to nourish them into fruits, or flowers. This discovery

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would wholly have discouraged her, if Providence, who intended to use her as the instrument of convincing my father of his errors, had not fortified her affection against her fears.

MR. De la Villette, who possessed all the merit of what the World calls a Fine Gentleman, was sensible of That of Emilia, and had conceived for the most amiable object, the most violent passion. If he found any defect in her character, it was her attachment to the duties of Religion; a weakness which he attributed to the prejudice of her education, and which he did not

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not doubt but that he should easily remove.

As the preliminaries of this match were at length settled by all parties, the family were impatient to see it concluded. Emilia considered this unanimous consent as the voice of Heaven; and at length Mr. De la Villette possessed an object which filled all his wishes. But those of Emilia were still to be accomplished; she had discovered with horror the principles of her husband, and soon experienced the difficulty of letting in any light upon his mind.

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THE first days of their marriage were spent in amusements common to such seasons of mirth; but the dissipation of mind which is always produced by public diversions, and the tumult of festivity, agreed but little with their design of knowing or understanding each other. Mr. De la Villette therefore proposed to his lady, that they should retire for the Autumn to an estate which he had at about twelve leagues distance, a place perfectly adapted to the pleasures of privacy and solitude. Emilia joyfully consented to this proposal; and my father soon gave her the opportunity which she had impatiently expected,

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pected, of attempting to correct his erroneous principles. The success, however, did not answer either her expectation, or her zeal. Mr. De la Villette, after a fruitless attempt to bring her over to his opinion, enjoined her an absolute silence on religious topics : she obeyed him ; and having no further hopes from any efforts which she could make on her husband, she determined to address herself to God alone, to obtain that change which she so ardently desired.

THERE, then, Mr. De la Villette passed his days with my Mother in a profound tranquility. Charmed with

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with the sweetness of her temper, and the strength of her mind, his heart was insensibly alienated from his dangerous companions ; he could not now conceive by what fascination he had been attached to those tumultuous pleasures which are merely sensual ; and as if he had dreaded the force of habit, should he again fall into the same company, proposed to my Mother a longer continuance in the country ; to which she consented with joy.

MR. De la Villette soon after became penfive : the great Truths which he had believed in his infancy, again presented themselves
in

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in this calm of his mind; the conversations of his wife incessantly recurred to his memory; he lost that fatal peace, which he had laboured so much to acquire. What efforts did he not use to preserve it? How often did he suggest to himself, that his uneasiness was the effect of those traces which, impressed in infancy, are never to be erased! This he also alledged to Emilia. When she had prevailed upon him to disclose his mind, he confessed that he was doubtful whether his anxiety was, as he allowed it might be, a motion of the Divinity, or the prejudice of Education. My Mother asserted, that this impression

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sion would be equally strong in a Child, who should never have received the least intimation of a Superior Being. She was then big with me; and expecting my birth every hour, she proposed to convince my Father of the truth of her assertion experimentally by his educating me himself, without communicating the least knowledge of a Deity; when, in the first efforts of my rational powers, he might gain a full conviction of the truth of what she had advanced. This project pleased my Father; and that he might carry it into execution, he made such a disposition of his affairs, as would prevent the intrusion

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sion of other business upon the time which he had devoted to me. He waited with impatience for the moment of my birth, and at length it arrived. When I was presented, as is usual, to my Mother, she took me in her arms, and lifting me up to Heaven, made a solemn dedication of me to that Infinite Being, of whose existence I was to convince him, who had instrumentally given me life.

TILL I should be capable of receiving his instructions, my Father employed himself in making the proper dispositions for the success of his design. The mansion be-
longing

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longing to the estate in which he had fixed his residence, was not contemptible, and the gardens were magnificent. At the end of a park, which bounded them, he caused a plain, but commodious house to be built, which he furnished with a small historical collection, transcribed in his own hand; where, in giving the substance of the most remarkable events, he had carefully omitted every circumstance which might suggest the least notion of a Deity. He also decorated our apartments with whatever could contribute either to my amusement or instruction. He collected as many of the known animals

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mals as could be easily procured, and paintings of the rest : he also extracted whatever had been written by credible authors about them.

WHEN I was in the second year of my age, he took upon him my education, and that of a child of the same age, whose company, he imagined, would amuse me. Providence seemed to second my Mother's design, by endowing me with an active mind, capable of the most rational reflections ; and it was not long before she had reason to applaud her project, and promise herself a happy issue. My Father permitted her to visit me at
the

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the hours when he himself was present ; at other times I was left to the care of a servant, who was dumb, and could not therefore be suspected. He taught me to read with great ease ; and with leading me through a course of what is called Polite Literature, he gave me a general knowledge of whatever might be useful in the future part of my life. He made me observe the admirable order of the Universe ; and the properties of each species of animals. My questions often prevented his own ; and I seemed to have no passion but the love of knowledge, a disposition which my Father diligently improved.

proved. And when my behaviour merited encouragement, an experiment in Natural Philosophy, or the present of some mathematical instrument, was my reward.

THE great variety of my employments prevented my being tired of any : and thus I attained to my twelfth year. Till then, but little attentive to what passed within me, I had formed no distinct idea which I can now recollect ; but an event altogether new to me, at once drew me out of Infancy, and caused reflections, which will never be effaced from my memory. My Readers may ask, What could be

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the reflections of an Infant, only twelve years old? and may, perhaps, exclaim against those which I am about to relate, as above my capacity. But let it be considered, that my Father appropriating almost the first moments of my life to knowledge, and having taught me to think as early as I was taught to speak, I was more improved at those years than others are at fifteen. Besides, my attention was not interrupted by variety of company, and study was my constant exercise. No foreign idea obliterated or confused those which had been impressed upon my mind: on the contrary, children, who, till the
age

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age of five or six years, are abandoned to the management of a nurse, and busied only in trifling amusements, with others of their own age, scarce know how to speak. There are some, however, who, by the advantages of a good education, prove the possibility of what I shall advance.

At the age, then, of twelve years and some months, I and the Child who was brought up with me sickened of the small-pox. I kept my bed but a few days; but my Brother, for so I called him, after languishing for some time, expired almost in my arms. This,

as I said, was an event new to me ; and my Father was all attention to the effect which it should produce. At first, I imagined that the Child had fallen asleep ; but taking him by the hand, which had burned ever since the first attack of his distemper, was surpris'd to feel it as cold as ice. I asked my Father the reason of this. He told me my Brother was dead ; and that he would never recover from the state in which I then saw him. I imagined that he was in jest : I called my Brother ; attempted to raise him up ; pulled him by the arm ; and, in a word, did every thing which I thought might awaken him. See-
ing,

ing, however, that all my attempts were ineffectual, I again asked my Father, " Whence proceeded the " obstinacy of my Brother, in not " answering me ?"

" AND how should he answer " you ?" says he : " he cannot hear " you."

" BUT," I replied, " his ears are " not stopped ; why should he not " hear me ? You tell me, he is no " more, and yet my eyes tell me " otherwise : I see him ; I touch " him ; and I am sure he is the " very same who spoke to me two " hours ago. Whence is it, then,

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“that for a few moments past, he
“sees me, and speaks to me no
“more?”

“It is,” replied Mr. De la Vil-
lette, “because his soul and body
“are no longer united, and because
“these two only subsist while this
“union is preserved,”

“WHAT is a soul, then?” said I,
with great eagerness.

“’Tis a substance,” said he,
“which sees by our eyes, hears by
“our ears, speaks by our mouth,
“and without which our bodies,
“as that of this child, remain
“motion-

“ motionless, like a stone, or block
“ of wood.”

“ I SHALL then,” said I, in tears,
“ talk with my Brother no more.
“ O why did he die, when he knew
“ I tenderly loved him, and should
“ long to hear him speak !”

AT this my Father smiled. “ But,
“ indeed, my Child,” said he, “ it
“ is not your Brother’s fault that
“ he is dead : we all must die ; my-
“ self, your Mother, and many
“ others, whom you never knew.
“ As Sleep irresistibly steals you
“ from yourself at some seasons, so
“ the time shall come, when this

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“eternal sleep shall bear you,
“however reluctant, to the grave.”

I CONTINUED some time pensive and silent ; and then, as doubting the truth of what my Father had said, returned to the motionless body, to which I again addressed my complaints. It was, however, necessary to take me from it. But my astonishment was doubled, when I was told, that when these remains of my dear Brother were committed to the earth, they would quickly become a part of it : this gave occasion to put other questions to my Father.

You

“ You have just told me,” said I,
“ that we were composed of two
“ parts, a body and a soul. This
“ body is about to be put into the
“ earth, what is to be done with
“ the soul? whither is that gone?
“ and what will become of it? Will
“ it moulder into dust, as this
“ body?”

THESE questions embarrassed my
Father; and musing a few minutes,
he took up a violin, on which he
had taught me to play; and raising
its sound-board, made me observe,
that the displacing of this alone,
prevented its giving any sound,
though all its parts still subsisted.

“ Just

“Just so,” says he, “it is with our
 “bodies : from the order in which
 “the parts are united, arise the fa-
 “culties of hearing and speaking ;
 “and ’tis this power of acting
 “which is called the soul, and
 “which ceases as soon as the parts
 “of the body are disunited.”

IT would have been easy for
 me to have remarked to my Father,
 that he had just before said, that
 the soul was a substance ; but
 wholly intent on the illustration
 which had been offered to my senses,
 I did not reflect on what had pre-
 ceded it.

I PASSED

I PASSED many days in a melancholy that made my usual amusements insipid. My Father was apprehensive that this would injure my health, and found no means more effectual to remove it, than the reading of those books which he had copied for me. This remedy produced the desired effect; and it soon became necessary to limit the use of it. I now learnt, with an astonishment not to be suppressed, that there were numerous cities peopled with men like us; and I could not conceive how we came to be separated from them. On this head only my Father refused to give me satisfaction; and
promising

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promising one day to communicate the reasons which had induced him to withdraw me from the commerce of men, enjoined me to ask him no further questions on that subject. My respect to my Father made me regard this prohibition as a law; and to make myself some recompence for the restraint which he had laid upon me, I doubled my application to my books.

WHAT astonished me yet more was, to find that kings and conquerors, the powerful, the rich, and the wise, suddenly dropped into Nothing, and often when they least expected it. Upon this occasion

sion I asked my Father, "How
 " men, who had discovered means
 " to build cities, to dare the rag-
 " ing of the sea, and to tame the
 " fiercest of beasts, had not found
 " out the secret of evading death?"

"It is," says he, "because all
 " compounded substances must at
 " length naturally disunite, and
 " consequently be destroyed."

"But," replied I, with warmth,
 "our frame was then but ill con-
 " trived; it should have been so
 " made as to endure for ever.
 "What can be more unpleasing
 " than to be at so much pains, in
 " amassing

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“amassing riches, building houses,
“and forming vast schemes, with-
“out being able to secure to our-
“selves the enjoyment of them for
“a moment? I had rather never
“to have been; and I take it ill of
“you, to have given me an exist-
“ence which I must lose so soon.”

My Mother, who was present at this conversation, could not contain her joy; which was still increased, when my Father had, by his answer, given me occasion to raise new objections.

“BUT, my Child,” says he,
“you ought not to take it ill of
“me,

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“ me, that I have given you exist-
“ ence, since neither your being
“ nor its duration depended upon
“ my choice ; it is Nature that de-
“ termines our entrance into this
“ world, and our departure out
“ of it.”

“ WHAT then,” said I, inter-
rupting him, “ is Nature ? I long
“ to know her ; I will weary her
“ with importunity, till she shall
“ suffer us always to be united,
“ that we may never die.”

“ THAT which is called Nature,”
says my Father, “ is no other
“ than Chance, which uniting cer-
“ tain

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“tain atoms, forms of them all
“the variety of bodies.”

“AH! my dear Father,” said I,
bursting into tears, “I see too
“plainly, that you sport with my
“anxiety, and do not love me: you
“fear that I should obtain leave of
“Nature to continue with you for
“ever, and therefore you tell me,
“she is nothing but Chance: you
“might with equal truth alledge,
“that your watch is made by
“chance of a piece of gold,
“which you had put into your
“pocket at night, and which
“had before morning changed its
“figure. But I am not so much a
“Child

“Child as to be deceived by such
 “sophistry. I shall escape from
 “hence, and learn the residence of
 “Nature from mankind: for to
 “deprive me of this knowledge is,
 “doubtless, the reason why you
 “have hitherto sequestered me from
 “the world.”

At those words I left the room,
 and retired into an obscure part of
 the park, to muse on that Nature,
 more powerful than those great
 men, whose history I had lately
 read; since they neither came into,
 nor continued in the world, but at
 her discretion. “But,” said I to my-
 self, “does this Nature never die?
 “She then is not composed of parts?

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“ When did she come into the world ?

“ Was another Nature there before

“ her ? or has she always existed ? ”

Just as I had made this reflection, my Father came up to me, and asking me, “ If I still continued “ out of humour ? ” I again urged him to tell me the truth. “ It is “ ridiculous,” says I, “ to ascribe “ to Chance that Order which “ you have so often made me admire in the Universe. If, when “ I write, the direction of my hand “ should be left to Chance, it would “ produce nothing but an unintelligible scrawl. When my dear “ Mother embroiders those beautiful flowers which you have so “ often

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“ often admired in her work, they
“ do not result from colours mingled
“ by accident, and a needle di-
“ rected by Chance. That there is
“ a Nature, you have confessed;
“ and as for me, I am convinced
“ that she never dies, since she has
“ so many ages presided over the
“ birth and death of mankind. Is
“ she not then a simple and uncom-
“ pounded Being? Must she not
“ therefore always have existed;
“ since making any thing is only
“ to unite the several parts of which
“ it is compounded? This, dear
“ Sir, you cannot dispute, without
“ denying your own principles.”

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THIS discourse struck my Father with inconceivable astonishment ; he perceived that he must either grant me that there is a first Being, the source of every other Being, or renounce the light of Reason. I was impatient to pursue the subject, and my Father's silence authorized me to proceed.

I LOOKED earnestly at him for a moment ; and then suddenly striking my hands together, cried out, " It must be so ! This Nature must have made the Sun, which, I read, has continued many ages. O tell me where, dear Sir ; for some where Nature must reside ! "

MR.

MR. De la Villette, who was too much confused to answer me immediately, proposed a walk; and notwithstanding all his efforts to appear with his usual chearfulness, he could not conceal the painful agitations of his mind; his pace was disordered, and he sometimes stopped to give way to those tears which he could not suppress. My Mother, who accompanied us, also wept; and I could not imagine the cause of a situation so greatly different from that in which I had been used to see them.

My Father at length, no longer able to withstand the radiant light

D 3 that

that spread around him, ordered me to stay in the garden, and, retiring with my Mother, left me in a perplexity which is not to be expressed. I waited impatiently for his return; but he could not come again. The veil was dropped, and he discovered with horror the dreadful state from which Providence had recovered him.

THAT there is a God, he was now convinced by the concurrent testimonies of his own Conscience, the Light of Nature, and my Discourse. But to what a dreadful excess had he forgotten that Infinite Being!

Being! The agitation of his mind communicating itself to his body, he was seized with a violent fever, which greatly alarmed the tenderness of Emilia; but it happily produced no ill consequence. She represented to him, that he would incur greater guilt, by despairing of the mercy of God, than he had already done, by doubting of his existence; and he was at length persuaded, that He, who had reclaimed him from Scepticism by methods so very extraordinary, would complete his own work, and find means to communicate a more perfect knowledge, and a more established faith.

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HE now hoped, that as Providence had made me the instrument of opening his eyes, he might derive new lights from our future conversations.

DURING his illness and recovery, I continued under inexpressible concern, and reflected incessantly on the Truths which I had discovered. "There is a Nature," said I, "which is the sovereign disposer of Life: she gives and resumes it at will: she is without beginning; for who could have given her being? Or if she derived her existence from another, from whom did that Parent Being proceed?"

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“ proceed? Her power must cer-
“ tainly be unlimited, since the
“ most powerful among men are
“ subject to her jurisdiction. She
“ must also be Infinite, since she
“ presides over life and death in all
“ places at the same time.”

HERE I paused to propose an
objection to myself. “ If this Na-
“ ture,” said I, “ is every where
“ present, where was she, when she
“ deprived my Brother of life?
“ Why did I not see her? Would
“ she, content with her own uni-
“ versal knowledge, have rendered
“ herself invifible, to prevent my
“ knowing her?” This difficulty
I could

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I could never solve. Happily for me, my Father was now in a condition to resume our little conferences. I wrote down both my reflections and doubts ; and begged him to read the whole, so soon as I believed him to be capable of application, without injury to his health.

RECOVERED from his errors, of the folly of which he was convinced, both by my reasonings, and his own serious reflections, he asked me, "How I had employed my time during his indisposition?" "I assured him, that I had not lost sight of him one moment, for
" my

"my mind had been constantly in
"his apartment."

"BUT," said he, "could your
"mind be in a place from which
"your body was absent?"

"CERTAINLY," said I; "and it
"seems to me that, very different
"from a body, which occupies but
"a small part of space, my mind
"at the same time sees, and is pre-
"sent in all the places that I know."

"Just so it is," replied my Fa-
"ther, "with that which you call
"Nature: she is without a body.
"Your reasoning was just, from
"which you deduced this idea of
"her

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“ her some days since : and as your
“ mind possesses a space much larger
“ than your body, and can, with-
“ out its assistance, convey itself in
“ an instant to the most distant
“ places ; Nature, which is a mind
“ much superior to ours, fills at
“ once the whole earth, and sees
“ and governs all things.”

Who can express my joy, when I
perceived by this discourse of my
Father, that he acknowledged the
existence of a Supreme Being.
Ideas and objections crouded at once
upon my mind.

To arrange my difficulties, and
to proceed to the solution of them
with

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with regularity, my Father made some alteration in our manner of life : he allotted me two hours every morning for reflection and writing ; and two after dinner for conference. And I put my first question in the following manner :

“ I AM astonished, dear Sir,” said I, “ that men of so great capacity and knowledge, as those whose actions I have read by your direction, never once made the reflections I have communicated to you ; and that they saw their friends and relations die, without attempting to discover the cause of so fatal an event.”

“ I MUST

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“I MUST confess,” answered my Father, “that there have been few
“who have not been sensible of
“what you have observed; and the
“greater part of them have con-
“curred to acknowledge a Superior
“Power presiding over all events!
“they even believed that this Great
“Being keeps an exact register of
“all our actions, in order to a suit-
“able retribution of rewards and
“punishments. Important reasons,
“as I have before told you, pre-
“vailed upon me to conceal from
“you this unanimous opinion of all
“Nations, which I long imagined
“to be the effect of Prejudice.”

“AND

"AND what is Prejudice?"
said I.

"It is," answered my Father,
"an attachment to certain princi-
ples, which we imbibe in our
tender years, and from which we
cannot afterwards disengage our-
selves without great difficulty."

"BUT who," said I, "could first
fill the minds of Children with
those prejudices? What view
could it answer?"

"THIS I will gladly explain,"
answered Mr. De la Villette.

"THE

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“THE first Men who assumed
“the government of others, after
“examining the characters of those
“whom they were to govern, dis-
“covered them to have faults alto-
“gether opposite to that Order
“which they had resolved to intro-
“duce. The far greater part of
“mankind, vain of their own abi-
“lities, cannot submit to men whom
“they deem their equals. Each
“individual, prompted by self-
“love, endeavours, either by law-
“ful or unlawful means, to pro-
“cure the pleasures or convenien-
“cies of life. Hence arise envy and
“jealousy against persons in more
“elevated circumstances, which
“produce

“ produce violence, murder, quar-
 “ rels, and animosities. How then
 “ was Society and Subordination to
 “ be established among men, whose
 “ different interests were incompa-
 “ tible with each other? To effect
 “ this, was the study of the first
 “ Legislators; and they imagined,
 “ they had discovered the means of
 “ establishing universal order and
 “ peace, by constraining men to
 “ keep within the bounds of Jus-
 “ tice, by the dread of a Supreme
 “ Being, whom they called God,
 “ who superintended all their ac-
 “ tions, and would not fail to re-
 “ ward the virtuous, and to punish
 “ the vicious.”

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“ NOTHING, indeed,” said I,
“ could be more natural than this
“ thought ; and he who first con-
“ ceived it, was beyond compa-
“ rison more wise than that Nature,
“ or that God, of whom, with all
“ his power, and all his knowledge,
“ we can have but a mean opinion ;
“ since he needed only to have done
“ what those great men suggested,
“ and Order would have been ef-
“ fectually established in the world.
“ Allow me to illustrate This by a
“ comparison : When I was yet a
“ child, if I happened to provoke
“ my Brother, or neglect my duty,
“ you always found some way to
“ punish me, and fear of the punish-
“ ment

"ment made me civil and diligent.
 "Would you have acted prudently,
 "had you behaved towards me
 "with an indolent indifference, and
 "left it entirely in my choice whe-
 "ther to lie, or to speak the truth,
 "to be diligent or idle, injurious
 "to my Brother, or courteous and
 "good-natured? I have, there-
 "fore, reason to conclude, that,
 "according to my conception, Na-
 "ture is very imperfect; a myste-
 "rious Being, endowed with all
 "possible knowledge and powers,
 "yet foolish and indolent. Yet
 "more—She must be wicked too,
 "since having the power with ease
 "to make men good, she has ne-
 "glected to do it."

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As our hour of conference was now expired, we were obliged to defer the proposing further doubts till the next day.

“ You assured me,” said I to my Father, resuming our conference, “ that Law-givers had dispensed
“ the means of subduing the passions of men, by affirming, that
“ Nature superintended their actions, in order to reward and
“ punish them, as they were virtuous or vicious. But could there
“ have been any so stupid as to believe them, and act in consequence of such belief, when the
“ events of every hour proved the affirmation to be false? If the
“ Histories

“Histories which I have read are
 “true, the Virtuous have been
 “rarely happy: I have frequently
 “seen them afflicted by poverty,
 “persecution, and sickness; while
 “the Vicious have long enjoyed the
 “peaceable possession of pleasure,
 “honour, and wealth. Virtuous
 “actions, therefore, are not always
 “rewarded, nor are vicious actions
 “always punished. And this I
 “should have objected to those
 “Law-givers, without fearing that
 “they could appeal from my ex-
 “perience.”

“THEY would have answered
 “you,” said my Father, “by in-
 E 3 “culcating

“culcating another prejudice. They
 “endeavoured to persuade man-
 “kind, that the active principle
 “which we call the Soul, was of
 “a different nature from the Body,
 “which, when it submitted to
 “Death, left the Soul free, that
 “this Soul was immortal; and
 “when disengaged from the Body,
 “passed into another life, in which
 “it was treated according to its
 “merits.”

“But how,” said I, “do we
 “know, that these Law-givers im-
 “posed a falsehood on the people,
 “when they asserted the Immorta-
 “lity of the Soul? Were there
 “not

“not men at that time sufficiently
 “qualified to discover their fallacy,
 “if such it was? What did they
 “advance in defence of their
 “opinions?”

“THEY alledged,” said my Fa-
 ther, “that the effect can never be
 “more excellent than its cause;
 “and thus the faculty of Thinking
 “being more excellent than matter,
 “could never be produced by it:
 “that the Soul was a portion of
 “Nature herself; because, like her,
 “she was capable of knowing and
 “thinking.”

“ALL this,” said I, “appears to
 “be extremely natural. Our Soul

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“ is one, she has no parts, she cannot be divided, and consequently is immortal.”

“ BUT,” said my Father, “ beasts have a power of thinking and knowing, and their works, in many instances, are as perfect as those of men : such as the nest of a swallow, the house of a beaver, and a bee-hive ; from whence it should follow, that they have a soul like ours. And yet the Learned, who allow Immortality to the Souls of Men, deny it those of all other animals.”

I COULD make no reply to this reasoning ; and after having racked my

my imagination to no purpose, I confessed, "that I could not comprehend how brutes could be denied to have reason and souls in all respects the same with our own."

"THIS, however," replied my Father, "has been done; and it is pretended, that God has given to them only a blind instinct, which determines their actions independently of their will, and which distinguishes them from Man, who, being a free agent, can act in consequence of his choice, as well as in favour of his interest."

I DESIRED

I DESIRED a few days to consider of an answer; and the moment I left my Father, turned over with the most ardent curiosity whatever he had collected for my use, concerning the Nature and Power of Animals. I laboured in this search some days without any success; and the following Argument was the result of my own reflections, and convinced me, that the Soul of a Man was totally different from that of a Brute.

“MEN act voluntarily, each one
 “governing himself by his own intelligence. This I infer from the
 “diversity of their operations. For
 “let two hundred Men be employed
 “in

“ in as many different places to
 “ build a town, there will not be
 “ any two of them, whose work
 “ will be exactly alike, as I have
 “ learned from the relations which
 “ you, Sir, have communicated to
 “ me. And why? Doubtless because
 “ each individual acts from a pecu-
 “ liar motive, guided only by his
 “ own reason and fancy. But, on
 “ the contrary, in the works of all
 “ Brutes of the same species there
 “ is a perfect uniformity; and no
 “ individual, in the construction of
 “ its nest, the manner of rearing
 “ its young, or taking its food, is
 “ distinguished from the rest of its
 “ species. They have, therefore,
 “ an

“ an involuntary and common In-
 “ stinct, acting independent on a
 “ will, which does not even leave
 “ them at liberty to add any im-
 “ provement to their works.”

My Father was equally pleased
 and surpris'd at my reasoning; and
 I did not fail to draw a consequence
 from it, in favour of the advocates
 for the Immortality of the Human
 Soul.

“ CAN a Powerful, an Eternal,
 “ and Infinite Being,” said I, “ be
 “ defective in goodness and wis-
 “ dom? Yet his wisdom would
 “ have been defective, if he had
 “ produced

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“produced Man casually and ca-
“priciously; and his goodness, if
“he had created him without de-
“signing him happiness. You will
“readily confess, that this is the
“opinion of the greater and better
“part of mankind. You, indeed,
“call their judgment, prejudice;
“but I believe it to be the effect of
“their reason, as it is of mine. Is
“it not true, dear Sir, that because
“Nature has made you the instru-
“ment of my being, you love me,
“and seek my happiness? You are,
“however, no more than a second
“cause of my existence. It is yet
“more natural for God to love and
“design a real happiness for his
“crea-

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“ creatures. You have taught me,
“ that happiness is not to be attained
“ but by virtue : God, therefore,
“ must have used all the necessary
“ means to inspire us with the love of
“ virtue ; and none seems more ef-
“ fectual than the giving us an im-
“ mortal Soul, which, after the dis-
“ solution of the Body, will be
“ susceptible of reward or punish-
“ ment.”

“ BUT,” said my Father, “ al-
“ though you so confidently believe
“ that Nature, which we call God,
“ to be supremely good and wise,
“ yet I shall prove the contrary by
“ this unanswerable argument : If
“ her

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“her wisdom and goodness had
“been equal to her power, she
“would have created Man perfect;
“nor would she have subjected
“him to that tumultuous croud
“of passions, which now fre-
“quently degrade him below the
“Beasts.”

THIS reasoning had a plausible appearance, yet I did not despair of an answer; and asked till to-morrow for that purpose.

THE time allotted to study was now passed; and we spent a few minutes in walking. When we returned to the house, I could not forbear giving

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giving my Father some distant hints of the satisfaction which my new discoveries yielded me every day.

“ I WOULD complain of you, “ Sir,” said I, “ if I durst. Why “ have you suffered me to remain “ so long ignorant of Truths, in “ which there is at once so much “ pleasure and utility ?”

“ BUT do you,” said my Father, smiling, “ make no account, then, “ of the pleasure which arises from “ the discovery of them, by the “ exertion of your own powers, “ nor of that which I have received “ from the sagacity of your under- “ standing,

“standing, and the sprightliness
 “and justness of your reasonings?
 “Confess rather, that the labour
 “of your search is abundantly com-
 “pensated by the satisfaction aris-
 “ing by its success; and that you
 “have, by sufferings comparatively
 “light and transient, acquired a
 “light and lasting glory.”

“BUT these still are sufferings,”
 said I; “and I think your love for
 “me might well have prevented
 “them.”

“By no means,” answered he;
 “for we cannot testify our affection
 “to those in whose happiness we

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“are interested, better than by sup-
“plying them with the means of
“becoming wise and virtuous by
“their own efforts: as a wise king,
“although he has the power to in-
“dulge his son in the peaceable
“enjoyment of every pleasure, yet
“exposes him to the fatigues and
“dangers of war; because it is
“more glorious to merit a crown
“by preserving it, than merely to
“possess it by inheritance.”

To this reasoning I could object nothing; and it gave me the greater pleasure, as I hoped to draw from it an answer to my Father's last objection.

THE

THE TRIUMPH OF TRUTH. 67

THE hour of study being come,
I wrote down my reflections as follows: " A king, however tender of
" the life of his only son, exposes
" him to the fatigues and dangers
" of war, that he may receive a
" crown with honour, which he
" would have inherited by birth-
" right: and this is a proof of his
" paternal affection; because it is
" more glorious to preserve and
" defend an empire, than possess it
" in voluptuous idleness. Nature,
" therefore, which you call God,
" might, consistently with wisdom
" and goodness, place us in such
" circumstances as would afford us
" an opportunity of acquiring some
F 2 " glory,

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“glory, by meriting the rewards
“which she has promised to Virtue.
“If we had been created necessarily
“virtuous, we should have been
“without merit, and consequently
“without glory.”

My Father was delighted with my answer, though a natural consequence of his own reasoning : and convinced more than ever of the existence of a Being supremely wise, he thought it tedious to see me continue to unfold by the mere light of Nature those Truths, which Libertinism in vain endeavours to turn into ridicule.

“WHAT

“WHAT would you give,” said he, “to be fully informed of the
“sentiments of the wisest Men of
“Antiquity on this subject; those
“Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans,
“whose virtue and wisdom you
“have so much admired?”

He had scarcely pronounced the words, than I threw myself about his neck, and intreated him not to delay giving me that satisfaction a moment.

“ON condition,” said he, “you
“read with moderation, I will in-
“dulge you. But the best things
“become dangerous in excess, and

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"Virtue resides in that medium
"which is equally distant from all
"extremes. I shall insist upon your
"taking some respite; and our lit-
"tle conferences shall be held but
"twice a-week. The intermediate
"days shall be spent in the cultiva-
"tion of talents, which, though
"not so essential, are yet become
"necessary in the world, where you
"must at length appear."

I SIGNIFIED my submission, and
concealed the pleasure which my
studies yielded, as a warm declara-
tion would have implied an impa-
tience at my restraint.

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Two days after, my Father introduced to me a very agreeable Man, who he told me was one of his particular friends that was come to share with us our agreeable solitude. Mr. de Vigni (for that was the name of our new guest) appeared to be about the same age with my Father. A deep melancholy, which he endeavoured in vain to conceal, gave him a dejected air, which I at first imagined to be the effect of his natural disposition; but I soon discovered that it was accidental, and that his natural temper was sprightly and chearful.

F
DURING

—DURING the first week of our acquaintance, I applied myself to observe him, and was soon attached to him by an ardent friendship. Hitherto I had been ignorant that my heart was susceptible of that passion. My love to my parents was habitual, affected me equally at all times, and had never produced any uncommon emotion; on the contrary, my friendship for Mr. de Vigni was gradual, and increased by sensible degrees: its progress surprised me, and every advance gave me a new pleasure. It is true, indeed, that Mr. de Vigni, by his reading, and diligence to oblige me, contributed to the daily increase

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increase of my complacency to him. He undertook with pleasure to instruct me in several accomplishments of which I had been hitherto ignorant; as Dancing, Riding, and Fencing: these exercises did not, however, prevent my application to Reading and Study. I was then entering into my fifteenth year, my intellectual faculties were mature, and I was capable of the most sensible reflections.

Mr. De la Villette had put into my hands the Metamorphoses of Ovid, and the Mythology of the Ancients. These I read over several times; but, disgusted with a plurality

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plurality of Gods, more vicious than the most abandoned of Mankind, I asked my Father, if it was really true, that so wise a people had paid a religious worship to such monsters in wickedness? and in what system they could include Deities so opposite to each other?

“THE Ancients,” said he, “were unanimously of opinion, that Fate was the sovereign arbiter of all events.”

“Fate was then superior to Jupiter?” said I. Fate was that Nature, which my Reason discovered. But why was Fate represented as a blind, unjust, and capricious Deity?”

“ Deity ? Why that multiplicity of
 “ Gods ? How did it happen that the
 “ same light which discovered to me
 “ one simple and perfect Being, did
 “ not equally enlighten and guide
 “ persons of such superior know-
 “ ledge ? And what could be the
 “ reason that some of them did not
 “ discover the extravagance of the
 “ Vulgar, and rise above the popu-
 “ lar prejudice ?”

“ You are not apprised,” said my
 Father, “ how far the power of Pre-
 “ judice will extend ; especially
 “ when it coincides with our natu-
 “ ral inclinations. Man, naturally
 “ inclined to Pride, to Pleasure,
 “ and

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“and Self-love, was well pleased
“with Gods who were subject to
“like weaknesses with himself.
“Far from desiring to invalidate
“the opinion which he had im-
“bibed in his infancy, he cherished
“his error; and great length of
“time, and a variety of almost in-
“credible events, were requisite
“to introduce more rational ideas
“of God into his mind.”

As the hour of conference was
passed, I retired to reflect upon what
I had heard, and a thought sud-
denly rushed upon my mind, which
ought to have occurred sooner.

“Has Man, then, a propensity to dis-
order”

“order and vice? Is Virtue, which
 “appears so pleasing, so lovely, and
 “even so natural to me, a stranger
 “to his breast? And why is she
 “not the object of his delight and
 “study, as she is of mine? We
 “must, then, acquire Virtue by study
 “and application; she is not the
 “spontaneous gift of Nature to
 “Mankind. No, certainly; Obedi-
 “ence is a virtue. Whence proceeds
 “that reluctance which I often expe-
 “rience in practising it? I remember
 “that while I was yet a child, I was
 “passionate and stubborn, and some-
 “times dared to strike my Brother
 “when he contradicted me: I am al-
 “so sensible, that I should have been

“ yet

“yet more outrageous, if my Fa-
 “ther had not wisely suppressed
 “these disorderly foibles, by punish-
 “ments proportioned to my age.
 “And those who have not been
 “thus happily restrained, have,
 “doubtless, felt these emotions,
 “which we call Passions, to gain
 “ground in their breasts, till they
 “have at length been so strengthen-
 “ed by habit, that all efforts to
 “controul them have been render-
 “ed unsuccessful.”

This reflection produced another.
 I imagined that Mr. De la Villette
 had justly represented God to me
 as having no affection for his crea-
 tures.

tures. "If he had created Man,"
said I, "free to good and evil, an
"happy choice would then, indeed,
"have rendered him virtuous; but it
"was not sufficient that Virtue thus
"depended upon his choice. Why
"was he subjected to a multitude
"of outrageous passions which ty-
"rannized over him, and scarce
"left him at liberty to chuse?"

I was touched inwardly at this
reflection! I felt great reluc-
tance to acquaint my Father, that
I had been deceived, and was be-
come a convert to his opinion;
but greater still, to forego the
idea which I had formed of the
Supreme

Supreme Being. I felt a secret attachment to this Author of my existence; and I was sensibly afflicted with the faults which I imagined I had discovered in him; and perceived that I could no longer love him with equal ardour, when I contemplated him as a Being who had no love for me.

“How unhappy should I have been,” said I to myself, “if Mr. De la Villette had been naturally addicted to cruelty, violence, and murder! Should I have still loved him, if, destitute of parental fondness, he had abandoned me to the necessity of Nature, and exercised

"ercised his power in acts of ty-
 "ranny and oppression. Yet this is
 "the conduct of the Author of my
 "Being, who, although he has
 "endowed me with a reasonable
 "soul, has yet placed me below the
 "most savage of the Brute Crea-
 "tion, by subjecting me to the ty-
 "ranny of tumultuous passions.
 "These passions, indeed, may be sub-
 "dued; but the conflict is too vio-
 "lent, and the victory too precari-
 "ous. Man, far from being the
 "most perfect, is the most defective
 "of his works. Let his gift of rea-
 "son be resumed, and let me be
 "placed in the lowest rank of Be-
 "ings; I shall then at least be no

“ longer subject to those transports,
“ so unworthy of Reason, which
“ hurry me into excesses, almost in
“ spite of myself, and enslave me,
“ as they have done the wisest of
“ men.”

THIS thought, which recurred incessantly, and which I did not dare to reveal to my Father, lest he should confirm my suspicions, plunged me into so deep a melancholy, that in a few days I was so much altered as scarce to be known.

THOUGH my Father greatly importuned me to discover the cause of my uneasiness, yet I persisted in

in telling him that no change had happened in my mind. He was, however, greatly alarmed at my situation. My reading and conferences were at an end ; I buried myself in solitude, where my mind was wholly taken up in regretting the love I had felt for the Supreme Being, which was incompatible with the defects that I had now discovered in him. I reviewed in my mind all our former conversations, and attempted to discover some clue that might guide me out of this labyrinth of doubt and perplexity ; and, urged by an almost involuntary impulse, I addressed the great Author of my Being, and implored the

guide

G 2

illu-

illumination of Divine Wisdom. He, doubtless, it was, who revived in my memory the words with which my Father had concluded our last conference: "Much time, and a variety of almost incredible events, are requisite to introduce more rational ideas of God into the human mind." "Those men, then," said I, immediately, "have changed opinion, compelled by the force of irrefragable evidence; and, doubtless, some truth has been concealed from me, which corrected their errors, and would therefore correct mine." This thought in a great degree restored my tranquillity, and I resolved to leave nothing

thing unattempted for the discovery of what was still so industriously kept secret.

My Father, apprehensive that my manner of life might have been the occasion of my melancholy, was intent upon procuring me more amusement. As my Mother had a very fine voice, and played extremely well on the harpsichord, we frequently formed a little concert. Music scarce suspended my uneasiness for a moment.

MR. De Vigni having one day conjured me by our friendship to discover the cause of my melancholy,

choly, I observed to him, that he, of all men, had the least right to make this request, since he had now lived with me a whole year, and during all that time had kept concealed in his breast some cause of perpetual discontent, which he attempted in vain to dissemble. My Father was pleased with my curiosity; and Mr. De Vigni, at his request, informed me, that he had forfeited all the happiness of his life, by too easily giving credit to suggestions which had been whispered against the honour of his wife, who was, notwithstanding, equally amiable and virtuous.

“ My

“ My misery,” said he, “ was
 “ the greater, as my conviction of
 “ her dishonesty did not extinguish
 “ my love. There is no misery
 “ equal to that of not being able
 “ to esteem the object of our love.
 “ My unhappy wife was the
 “ victim of my jealousy, and I was
 “ not convinced of her innocence,
 “ till the moment in which I lost
 “ her for ever.”

THIS is only a summary of Mr.
 De Vigni's adventures, which he
 related particularly in a very affect-
 ing manner. But that which made
 the strongest impression upon me,
 was the description of what he suf-

ferred at the moment in which he imagined he had discovered the disloyalty of his wife. The words in which he described the state of his mind, "That it is a dreadful thing to love an object which we can no longer esteem," sunk deep into my heart. They exactly expressed my own case, and at one stroke exhibited a just picture of my breast.

AFTER thanking Mr. De Vigni for complying with my request, I told him, that as he had now opened his heart to me, I ought no longer to conceal mine from him. "I now feel," said I, "all those evils
" which

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“ which you have suffered ; and I,
“ like you, love an object which I
“ cannot esteem, without the least
“ hope of ever discovering it to be
“ such as will enable me to give
“ way to the emotions of my heart
“ without repugnance.”

How great was the surprize of my Parents at this declaration ! I was in love ; but with whom ? I had never seen any object but those within our own walls ; — what then could have excited a passion so violent as to destroy my peace, and endanger my life ? At first, my Father imagined, that some person had deceived his vigilance, and intruded
upon

upon our solitude without his knowledge. But I soon undeceived him, by finishing the recital of my uneasiness. "Commiserate my suffering!" added I, looking earnestly at him, "and remove a burden which otherwise I must shortly sink under."

MR. De la Villette, agreeably surprised, could no longer delay the restoration of my peace. "Be comforted, my Child," said he: "that Being who has touched your heart, is not such as the books I lately gave you have exhibited. He has been better understood by more rational enquirers, who have
" known

“known him as he is, so far as
 “an human mind can know so ex-
 “alted a Being. He is not more
 “absolute than wise; not more
 “powerful than just: but though
 “all his perfections are equal in
 “themselves, yet to us his Good-
 “ness might seem to exceed, so
 “much has this attribute been ma-
 “nifested in his works. Far from
 “subjecting man to his passions, he
 “gave him an absolute dominion
 “over them. But Man, though
 “he might have preserved this su-
 “periority, yet voluntarily relin-
 “quished it, and of choice be-
 “came the slave of those impulses
 “which he had power to con-
 “troul.”

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THE pleasure which I felt at this discourse was inexpressible, and the tranquillity of my mind was perfectly restored, when my Father had read the First Chapter of Genesis, and explained how the disobedience of the first Man had contaminated his Posterity, and rendered us obnoxious to Concupiscence and Death.

ONE reflection, however, allayed my joy. "God is just," said I; "but has he pursued the dictates of his Justice, by involving in the offence of a guilty parent an innumerable progeny of innocent Children, who, perhaps, more faithful

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“ faithful than their father, might
“ have kept inviolate the com-
“ mandment of their Creator? Does
“ not the punishment exceed the
“ offence? And ought so trivial an
“ act of disobedience to be attended
“ with such fatal consequences?”

My Mother was impatient to
answer this objection: “ A King,”
said she, “ raises a man from the
“ lowest indigence and obscurity;
“ he makes him his favourite, and
“ heaps wealth and honours upon
“ him, till he leaves him nothing
“ to wish but the throne. What
“ guilt could equal the criminal
“ ingratitude of this Man, if, for-
“ getting

“ getting his obligations to his Be-
 “ nefactor and his King, he should
 “ exert the powers which he re-
 “ ceived from his bounty, to ruin,
 “ dethrone, and, if possible, destroy
 “ him? This is an exact repre-
 “ sentation of the crime of the first
 “ Man. By eating the forbidden
 “ fruit, he imagined he should be-
 “ come equal to his Benefactor,
 “ shake off the yoke of depend-
 “ ance, and compel him to admit a
 “ partner in his throne. What
 “ could be more odious? And to
 “ carry on the similitude, would you
 “ not think this injured Prince a
 “ pattern of perfect goodness, if,
 “ contented to banish this guilty
 “ subject,

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“ subject, and replace him in the
“ state from which he had been
“ raised, he should give him hopes
“ of being restored to his favour,
“ by a more worthy behaviour, and
“ by some signal service? Could
“ you accuse such a Prince of in-
“ justice, if the children of this
“ wretch, banished with him, had
“ no longer any claim to the boun-
“ ty of their Prince, but were
“ left, like their father, to expect
“ it only as they should merit it
“ by their services? Such exactly
“ is the conduct of the Supreme
“ Being to an ungrateful and re-
“ bellious creature. But this is
“ not all that he has done for Man;
“ and

“and you will soon learn what
“lengths the Divine goodness has
“been carried in his behalf.”

My Mother's reasoning appeared to me to be unanswerable; and wholly resigning myself to my natural prepossession in favour of the Author of my Being, I was transported with joy to find him as perfect as I had wished him to be. I most earnestly requested my Father to conceal nothing from me which related to the Deity; and, yielding to my intreaties, he put into my hands the Old Testament, which I read with inexpressible pleasure.

I WAS

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I was now eighteen years old, and Mr. De la Villette, to whom I became every day more dear, being entirely recovered from his errors, thought he owed me this discovery, before he introduced me to Society, and placed me in the World: it was with difficulty that he revealed this secret; and we mutually admired the means by which God had been pleased to awaken him to a sense of his duty and happiness.

THE reading of the Sacred Books having given me no idea of the Christian Institution, I thought our family was Jewish; and having

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observed

observed the Nation of the Jews to be but a very small part of the World, I imagined that some extraordinary event had removed us into a strange country; and that in the midst of Infidels we should scarce be permitted to worship God according to his own appointment. This reflection gave me some uneasiness.

“AND why,” said I to Mr. De la Villette, “do we not endeavour
 “to return to our Nation, and partake of the sacrifices which are
 “offered in the Temple? Why
 “do we continue among Infidels,
 “who refuse to acknowledge the
 “true

“true God? What can they al-
 ledge in defence of this refu-
 sal?”

“THEY say,” answered my Fa-
 ther, “that the Holy Scriptures,
 which you so much admire, are
 no better than a series of false-
 hoods; and that Moses, as skil-
 ful in the art of Deception as of
 Government, invented those fic-
 tions to reduce the Jews to obe-
 dience, who were naturally a
 stubborn, rebellious, and incre-
 dulous people.”

“AND what answer can we make
 to this objection?”

To this Mr. De la Villette replied: "A month hence we are to enter into the World; in the mean time, do you consider how these pretenders to Free-thinking, who would be thought to believe nothing but what they see, or of which they can have objective evidence, may be confuted." Accordingly, I passed that month in examining the question; and the following are the answers which I communicated to my Father:

"THERE is a Supreme Being;
 "This, Reason teaches; and this Being possesses all possible perfections in the highest degree. His
 "chief

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“ chief end in creating Man was
“ his own glory ; every other would
“ have been unworthy of his dig-
“ nity. A subordinate end was the
“ happiness of his Creatures : his
“ goodness made this a law to him-
“ self. Man cannot be happy but
“ by the practice of virtue. Hence
“ we must infer, that a Divine Re-
“ velation was necessary to commu-
“ nicate to Man the knowledge of
“ his Creator, and consequently the
“ duty of Divine Worship, and to
“ enjoin him to practise virtue, and
“ avoid vice. Let us examine the
“ various opinions of Mankind
“ concerning the Deity, and which
“ are the most probable. Let

“ us enquire whether the Law
“ given by Moses be really worthy
“ of God; how he could render
“ the Jews obedient to this Law,
“ who were an obdurate incredu-
“ lous people, and, doubtless, would
“ not have received it but upon
“ indubitable evidence of its Divine
“ Original. Moses, it is alledged,
“ was an Impostor. But could the
“ Jews have been deceived by a false
“ relation of facts, to which, if real,
“ they must have been eye-witnesses?
“ Would they not have brought a
“ charge of falsehood against the
“ Plagues of Egypt, the Passage of
“ the Red Sea, the Manna of the
“ Wilderness, the Punishment of
“ Corah,

“Corah, Dathan, and Abiram?
 “Would they not have insulted
 “Moses with this question: ‘How
 “can you expect that we should
 “believe facts which happened long
 “before we were born, upon your
 “testimony, when you have the ef-
 “rontery to lie so grossly concern-
 “ing facts of which we must all
 “have been living witnesses?’ But
 “the Jews, far from making any
 “such exceptions, received a bur-
 “densome Law, to which nothing
 “could have prevailed on them to
 “submit, if they had not been con-
 “vinced, by the miracles which
 “Moses wrought before their eyes,
 “that he acted by a Divine Com-
 “mission.”

I READ the Holy Scriptures every day, and every day started new difficulties on what appeared obscure. My Father himself assisted me in forming objections. "Have you no reluctance," said he, "in assenting to things so opposite to Reason? Does your understanding calmly submit?"

"Yes, doubtless," said I, "when I have reason to believe that they are revealed by the inspiration of a God, who can neither be deceived, nor deceive."

"Your reasoning would be just," said he, "if the revelation was immediate

“diate from God to you : but how
“will you distinguish whether that
“which is delivered by others as a
“revelation from God, be really
“such; or whether it be no more
“than the devices of the person
“who delivers it ?”

“NOTHING can be more easy,”
said I, “inasmuch as God con-
“firmed the truth of the Revela-
“tion of which they were the in-
“struments, by works which no
“human power could effect; and
“tho’ my faith be implicit, its
“foundation is, notwithstanding,
“firm. I believe that which I
“cannot comprehend, because the
“person

“ person who declares it, is mani-
 “ festly the instrument of that God
 “ who can neither be deceived him-
 “ self, nor deceive me, as I have
 “ already observed. I know this
 “ Revelation is from God, because
 “ he communicates of his Omni-
 “ potence to those who bring it;
 “ which, if they were Impostors,
 “ he could not do without becom-
 “ ing an accomplice in the deceit.”

My Father had promised soon to
 introduce me into the World; and
 tho' my curiosity for new objects
 was great, yet my impatience to
 have all my difficulties removed by
 the conversation of persons of more
 extensive

extensive knowledge, was greater still. "But," said I to myself, "we are not now in Judea. Who, "among these Heathens, can be "capable of giving me instruction? "May I hope ever to rejoin our "Nation, which now probably "groans under some new captivi- "ty? When will that Messiah "come, who is to be her deli- "verer, and to reign over her for "ever?"

THIS reflection gave rise to others: "God promised Abraham that the "Messiah should be born of his "descendants, and yet the Pro- "phets seem to intimate, that he is "to

“to be the Son of God; and not
 “only the Partaker of the Divine
 “Nature, but God himself.” This
 had the appearance of a contra-
 diction, which I was impatient to
 see reconciled; and immediately
 stated it to my Father, who as im-
 patiently expected it.

“It is here,” said he, “that you
 “have need to recur to your prin-
 “ciples, and to exert that faith
 “by which we are enabled to be-
 “lieve what we cannot compre-
 “hend. The Messiah is to be at
 “once the Son of God, the Son of
 “Abraham, and very God himself.
 “That faith which teaches us that
 “there

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“there is but One God, teaches us,
“also, that tho’ he is One in Es-
“sence, yet he is Three in Person;
“and these Three, the Father, the
“Son, and the Spirit, are equal in
“Goodness, Wisdom, and Power.
“The Son is begotten of the Father
“from all Eternity; the Spirit is
“proceeding from the Father and
“the Son; and there are Three dis-
“tinct Persons, yet the same in sub-
“stance, and but one God. This,
“indeed, is an incomprehensible
“mystery; but God would cease to
“be God, if he could be compre-
“hended by our limited under-
“standings. This being supposed,
“let us consider the sin of the first
“Man.

“ Man. It was a daring attempt
“ against the Majesty of Heaven ;
“ nothing therefore could make re-
“ paration for such an offence. The
“ infinite superiority of the Offend-
“ ed to the Offender, made it impos-
“ sible for Man to offer a satisfaction
“ adequate to his crime: this could
“ be effected by none inferior to a
“ Deity. But as it is impossible
“ for God to suffer, it became ne-
“ cessary to unite the Two Natures,
“ the Human and the Divine ; and
“ this expedient the Wisdom of
“ God hath devised and executed.
“ His Word, the Second Person of
“ this Trinity, became incarnate,
“ and by uniting himself with the
“ Human

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“Human Nature, qualified him-
“self to make an adequate atone-
“ment for Man’s offence. As
“Man, he suffered the punish-
“ment due to sin; as God, he
“imparted an infinite value to his
“sufferings. As the Word, he is
“the Son of God; as Man, the
“Son of Abraham.”

“BUT, Sir,” said I, interrupting
my Father, “you speak of this
“astonishing event as already
“past?”

“It is really so,” replied Mr.
De la Villette; “and to give you
“a perfect knowledge of these sub-
“lime truths, I will put into
“your

“your hands the Life of this God-
 “Man, and the divine precepts
 “that he hath left us.”

My Father accordingly gave me the New Testament; and as I read it, my astonishment and my doubts encreased at every page. A God cloathed in Human Nature! A God in infancy! poor, persecuted, and dying an ignominious death! These mysterious incidents at first staggered my belief. I compared the events of the Life of Jesus Christ with what the Prophets had predicted of him; and my amazement encreased every moment. “None but God,” said I,
 “could

“could have foreseen such distant
 “events, and have caused them
 “to be foretold in so perspicuous
 “a manner. But was it consistent
 “with the Majesty of a God to unite
 “himself to a Nature so imperfect
 “as ours, and to suffer, as Man,
 “such poverty, pain, and igno-
 “miny?” These objections I put
 to Mr. De la Villette, who had
 foreseen them, and answered them
 in order.

“You are to remark,” said he,
 “two states of Man; that of Inno-
 “cence, and that into which he fell
 “by his offence. Human Nature,
 “before the disobedience of Adam,

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“ had nothing to debase it. Man,
“ then the master of his passions, and
“ capable of knowing and of lov-
“ ing his Creator, attained some de-
“ gree of resemblance to his God
“ by this knowledge, and this
“ love; for it is the property of
“ love to produce a conformity to
“ its object. All the miseries and
“ frailties of the human race are
“ the consequences of the first
“ sin. The Word united to the
“ Human Nature, as it was in its
“ primitive state, which was that
“ of Innocence; expiates the ini-
“ quity of Man, maintains the glo-
“ ry of his Father, and secures the
“ happiness of the World. These
“ are

“are the fruits of his death; and
 “what could be more glorious !”

I WAS now convinced that the sufferings of Christ, far from diminishing, enhanced his glory. I retired into my apartment to meditate on those great truths; and having again read over the Life of Jesus Christ with great attention, I was confirmed in a faith, which was so much the more firm, as it appeared to have Reason for its foundation.

BUT Mr. De la Villette, who was desirous to see how far I could carry my conviction, prepared new

matter for conversation. He had for some time maintained a literary correspondence with a friend, equally eminent for his learning and piety, whom my mother had introduced to his acquaintance. This Gentleman willingly entered into his scheme; and being arrived at our retreat, my Father introduced him to me as one of the Doctors of the Mosaic Law.

AFTER the first compliments, I could not forbear to express my surprize. "I thought," said I to my Father, "from perusing the Sacred Books, that the Jewish Law was abolished, and that the Law,
" of

“ of which the Son of God him-
“ self became the Apostle, had
“ been substituted in its stead :
“ Was I then mistaken ?”

“ CERTAINLY,” replied Mr. De la
Boissiere, our new guest, “ the Law
“ of Moses still subsists, and we
“ expect the coming of the Mes-
“ siah to confirm and propagate it
“ throughout the World.”

“ You expect the Messiah !” said
I, with astonishment. “ My Father
“ then deceived me, when, giving
“ me the New Testament, he af-
“ firmed that it contained the Life
“ of

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“of the Messiah, and that he came
“many years ago.”

“He has certainly deceived you,”
replied Mr. De la Boissiere: “that
“person, whose History you read,
“was an Impostor, whom our Fathers
“deservedly punished. The true
“Messiah shall come with power to
“deliver us, and rebuild the Tem-
“ple of the true God with splen-
“dor and magnificence.”

“You are then,” replied I,
“now in captivity, and the Temple
“subsists no more?”

“Most certainly,” said he. “Dis-
“persed through all the Nations,
“we

“ we have no longer either Temple,
“ or City, or King. But the greater
“ our depression, the more perfect
“ shall be our glory at the coming
“ of our King, to whom God, ac-
“ cording to his promises, will give
“ an absolute and universal domi-
“ nion.”

UPON my expressing a curiosity
to know by what event so powerful
a people had been dispersed, Mr.
De la Boissiere put into my hand
Josephus's History, and I applied
myself to read the Book which
treats of the taking of Jerusalem.

THE diligent perusal of this, and the Prophets, was the work of some days ; and at length I asked Mr. De la Boissiere, if he was willing to hear the reflections I had made on our last conversation ; he consented, and I proceeded thus :

“ Do you believe that the Prophets were indeed divinely inspired ? ”

“ Most assuredly,” said Mr. De la Boissiere.

“ I INFER thence,” said I, “ that the Messiah is already come, and that you expect him in vain : First, because

“because God promised David that
 “his descendants should reign till
 “the end of Time. His descend-
 “ants did reign till the coming of
 “Jesus Christ; and either the pro-
 “mises of God are false, or Jesus
 “Christ is the Son of David, of
 “whose reign there shall be no
 “end. Secondly, because at the
 “return of the Jews from the Ba-
 “bylonish Captivity, the Prophet
 “Hagai says, ‘That the Temple
 “then to be built should surpass
 “in glory the Temple of Solomon:’
 “and as this Temple is now de-
 “stroyed, the Messiah is already
 “come; since it is impossible he
 “should enter a Temple, of which
 “there

“there is not one stone remaining
 “upon another. Thirdly, I read
 “in the Prophets, that God will ne-
 “ver wholly abandon his People;
 “and History supports their testi-
 “mony. Of whatever crimes the
 “Jews were guilty, they no sooner
 “returned to the Lord, than he
 “pardoned their iniquity, and raised
 “them up a Deliverer. By what a
 “series of wonders were they
 “brought out of Babylon? What
 “then is that crime for which God
 “has abandoned them during so
 “many ages? Why is he deaf to
 “their complaints and supplica-
 “tions? What sin have they com-
 “mitted thus to draw down his an-
 “ger

“ger upon them? Have they, as
 “in the time of Manasseh, sacrificed
 “their children to idols, and wor-
 “shipped the works of their hands?
 “They crucified, indeed, the Son of
 “Mary; but if he was not the Son
 “of God, he was a Blasphemer.
 “Josephus in vain asserts that he
 “was a Prophet: there is no me-
 “dium; either he was the Messiah,
 “or an impious Impostor, deserving
 “universal abhorrence and detesta-
 “tion. It is Deicide, doubtless,
 “which God has revenged upon your
 “Nation; a crime foretold by the
 “Prophet, when he says, ‘*The*
 “*stone which the Builders refused,*
 “*is become the head of the corner.*’

“ BUT

" BUT if these proofs that the
 " Messiah is already come, are not
 " sufficient for your conviction, ex-
 " amine the Life of Jesus, and
 " you must perceive the rays of his
 " Divinity through the veil of Hu-
 " man Nature. The winds and
 " waves, and death itself, were obe-
 " dient to his command. Futurity
 " hid nothing from his view; he
 " wept the destruction of your
 " City; he saw Vespasian destroy
 " it; and told his Disciples, that of
 " the Temple, which was then the
 " object of their reverence and ad-
 " miration, not one stone should re-
 " main upon another."

" I AM

“ I AM astonished,” said Mr. Boissiere, “ at the confidence with
 “ which you reason. And in the
 “ first place I must inform you,
 “ that our Rabbi’s have always
 “ taught, that a Son of David now
 “ reigns in some unknown region,
 “ and that his Kingdom shall sub-
 “ sist till the coming of the Messiah.
 “ In the second place, with respect
 “ to the dispersion and persecutions
 “ that we have suffered, they say,
 “ that God cannot reverse the sen-
 “ tence pronounced against us ;
 “ but that he passes part of the
 “ night in roaring like a Lion, and
 “ crying out, *Woe is me, to have de-*
 “ *stroyed my People, my Temple, and my*
 “ *City !*”

It was not possible for me to endure the recital of these extravagancies with patience. I rose abruptly, and, forgetting the respect due to the company, went out, saying, "That fools only were capable of inventing such ridiculous fables, or of hearing them related."

My Father followed me soon afterwards; and feigning that Mr. De la Boissiere resented my rudeness, "Learn," says he, "to support your argument with temper; the laws of Conversation permit us to dispute, but not to substitute invectives for reason. I do not require you to adopt Mr. De la Boissiere's

“ Boissiere’s sentiments ; but I expect that you should answer him
 “ with politeness : apologize for
 “ your late breach of decorum.”

I OBEYED Mr. De la Villette without the least reluctance ; nor did I blush to begin a reformation, by confessing my fault. My apology was well received, and the dispute was not resumed that day.

ON the morrow after dinner, I asked my Father, what became of the Apostles of Jesus after his Resurrection. “ I wonder, said I, “ that
 “ the God-Man made choice of
 “ such instruments to propagate
 “ the

“the Gospel. It is difficult to con-
 “ceive persons more grossly igno-
 “rant, more criminally timid, and,
 “in all respects, more unequal to
 “so great a work. In many in-
 “stances, they appear to be desti-
 “tute of common sense. Witnesses
 “of the Miracles of their Lord,
 “and but a few days after the
 “Multiplication of the Loaves, be-
 “ing cautioned to beware of the
 “leaven of the Pharisees, instead
 “of attending to the moral of his
 “discourse relative to the Leaven,
 “they immediately replied, *We*
 “*have no bread*. Disciples of a
 “Master who incessantly inculcated
 “humility, they contended for
 “pre-

" pre-eminence, and each desired
 " the chief place in his Kingdom;
 " they professed a fidelity to him
 " which no danger could shake, and
 " yet in a few hours basely deserted
 " him in the hands of his enemies.
 " His favourite followed him, but
 " it was at a distance; and the Dis-
 " ciple whose professions of ad-
 " hering to him had been so fan-
 " guine but a little before, denied
 " him upon the interrogation of a
 " servant. I can scarce believe
 " that such persons could execute
 " the designs of the Messiah."

" THEY were, indeed," said my
 Father, " rude and illiterate; but

“ consider well the difficulty of the
 “ enterprize to which they were ap-
 “ pointed. They were sent out in-
 “ to all countries to preach a cru-
 “ cified God, and establish an au-
 “ stere law, to oblige Sensuality to
 “ chastity, Avarice to poverty, and
 “ Ambition to contempt.”

“ I HAVE already made these re-
 “ flections,” said I, “ and I cannot
 “ persuade myself that they made
 “ great conquests.”

“ You will be much surpris’d,
 “ then,” said Mr. De la Villette,
 “ when I tell you what they atchiev-
 “ ed ten days after the Ascension.

“ Peter

“ Peter, the weak, the partial, and
 “ the irresolute, no sooner received
 “ the gift of the Holy Ghost, which
 “ his Lord had promised him, than
 “ he became insensible to fear. He
 “ told the assembled Jews, that He
 “ whom they had crucified was the
 “ Lord of Life; that they had no
 “ resource but Repentance; and
 “ that they ought to worship Him
 “ whom they had nailed to a cross!
 “ Four thousand of those that heard
 “ him smote their breasts, and were
 “ baptized; and soon afterwards a
 “ much greater number, touched
 “ with the wonders that were per-
 “ formed by the Apostles, became
 “ profelytes to the religion which

“ they preached, notwithstanding
 “ its austerity. In vain did Herod
 “ and the Jews cast them into pri-
 “ son. The death of one, and the
 “ punishment of others, had now no
 “ power to intimidate ; they an-
 “ swered with boldness and constan-
 “ cy, when they were forbidden to
 “ preach the Gospel of Christ, Judge
 “ ye, whether it is fit that we should
 “ obey Men rather than God.”
 “ Judea became too small a district
 “ to circumscribe the labours of
 “ these zealous Evangelists ; they
 “ spread themselves over the whole
 “ earth, attacked Idolatry in its
 “ capital, and preached Christ cruci-
 “ fied in Rome itself. The Poten-
 “ tates

“tates of the earth in vain opposed
 “the progress of the Gospel. The
 “Apostles, after having sealed it
 “with their blood, sprung up mul-
 “tplied in their successors; the
 “blood of the new Christians be-
 “came a seed in the earth, which
 “received it, that produced a
 “thousand for one; and, after
 “many ages, the Cross was dis-
 “played on the top of the Capitol.”

“BUT, Sir,” said the pretended
 Jew, “who attests the truth of
 “these Miracles said to be wrought
 “by the Apostles?”

“Permit me to say,” answered I,
 “that you cannot deny them, with-

"out admitting a greater. If the
 "World had changed its senti-
 "ments without having seen these
 "Miracles which you call in ques-
 "tion, this would have been a
 "greater prodigy than any related
 "in the New Testament. As for
 "me, I no longer wonder at the
 "choice of Jesus. If he had ap-
 "pointed men of learning and
 "power for the conquest of the
 "World, his victory would have
 "been less signal and glorious; but
 "as it is, his power appears with
 "all its lustre."

"I MUST submit to so clear ad-
 "monition," said Mr. De la Boissi-
 fiere ;

siere ; " I am no longer a Jew ; and
 " I believe," added he, laughing,
 " that if I had ever been really so,
 " I should now have been a convert
 " to Christianity. You are sur-
 " prised, Sir," said he to me, with
 a smile of complaisance. " Forgive
 " my dissimulation ; it has too well
 " served to illustrate the force of
 " your genius, for you to resent it
 " as an injury."

My Father then gave me the real
 character of our pretended Jew ; and
 we made ourselves very merry with
 the anger which I had conceived
 against him.

As I was to continue but a few days longer in my solitude, I improved them in reading the Acts of the Apostles, and the rest of the New Testament; and for my farther information, Mr. De la Boissiere related the persecutions which the first Christians suffered; by what means Christianity prevailed against all opposition, and was preached in every nation; and at length fully explained to me the Doctrines of the Church.

My Father then requested the Ecclesiastic on whose ministry he had attended since his conversion, to visit us in our retreat, and assist
me

me in the discharge of those duties of which I had hitherto been ignorant. This was a day of Triumph for my Mother, in which her enterprize was compleated with success. She would willingly have passed her whole life in a solitude, which had been endeared to her by so many interesting events, and which she had quitted but three times in eighteen years. But my Father had otherwise determined. His revenue, considerably augmented during our retreat by the retrenchment of all superfluous expences, promised me a splendid inheritance; and he was resolved to neglect nothing that might enable me to possess it with

with happiness and honour. Paris appeared to him the fittest place to answer his purpose. Mr. De Vigni consented to accompany us thither; and Mr. De la Boissiere had a great desire to be of the party; but indispensable business retained him in the country: he promised, however, to dispatch it with all possible expedition, and join us at Paris.

A KIND of dread seized me when I anticipated the moment in which I was to quit my solitude. I conceived myself about to be transported into a strange country, in which I should have neither language nor appearance in common

mon with the inhabitants. I wished that Mr. De la Villette had, instructed me in the manners and customs of the people among whom I was going to reside, and my fears at length compelled me to communicate my wish; but my Father was resolved to enjoy my surprize.

“ I do not refuse,” said he, “ to
 “ be your guide through the scenes
 “ that are now opening before you ;
 “ but I shall accommodate my assistance to the contingent exigencies as they arise ; and I am
 “ very desirous that you should derive from your own reflection
 “ the

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“ the knowledge that you are wil-
“ ling to owe to my instruction.
“ I shall only apprize you of so
“ much of the character of the
“ French nation, as is necessary
“ you should know.

“ THE French have a sprightli-
“ ness and impetuosity in their tem-
“ per, which urges them to follow
“ every rising inclination, without
“ affording them leisure to weigh
“ the consequences: whatever is
“ new amuses, and whatever a-
“ muses pleases them. As a con-
“ sequence of this, they seek a new
“ acquaintance with eagerness, and
“ heap civilities upon him with
“ a thought-

" a thoughtless profusion. You
 " will be tempted to imagine, that
 " you are indebted to a friendship
 " which your own merit has sud-
 " denly inspired, for all these civi-
 " lities and offers of service; but
 " nothing is more false: this ex-
 " cess of courtesy is no more than
 " a salary, which they pay you for
 " the amusement which you afford
 " them. They are familiar with
 " objects that present themselves
 " every day; in these there is no-
 " thing to examine, or to criticise.
 " You arrive: their eyes, as it were,
 " devour you with avidity; and
 " your person, your understanding,
 " and character, become the objects
 " of

“ of a study, which diverts their
 “ attention from objects that are
 “ become insipid and tiresome, be-
 “ cause they afford nothing new.
 “ Stand, therefore, on your guard ;
 “ lend yourself to all, but give
 “ yourself to none without a mature
 “ examination.

“ THIS,” continued my Father,
 “ is the only lesson that I shall give
 “ you. I will, as I told you be-
 “ fore, be your Guide ; and the
 “ authority of the Father shall not
 “ appear through the familiarity of
 “ the Friend. I assure myself, that
 “ you will confide in me without re-
 “ serve ; for this will enable me to
 “ make

“make the proper dispositions in
 “every stage of our journey; and
 “if your confidence in me is per-
 “fect, I dare undertake to conduct
 “you in safety through all the
 “dangers that we may encounter
 “on the road.”

I ASSURED my Father, that I
 would deserve his goodness to the
 utmost of my ability; and we
 passed the rest of the day in making
 preparations for our departure,
 which was fixed for the morrow.

It was now near the end of Au-
 tumn; and as we set out very early
 in the morning, scarce any object
 could

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could be distinguished when we got into the coach. The impatience which I felt at this time is not to be expressed, and I thought the day would never appear: the darkness of the night, however, being at length wholly dissipated, I looked round me with the utmost eagerness and curiosity. I was astonished at the croud of people whom I saw employed in cutting grapes. The sun being risen, and the day being hotter than usual in that season, I was touched with pity for those unhappy wretches, who seemed to me to be the only persons who inherited the curse which God had pronounced on all Mankind, *That*
they

“they should earn their bread with the
 “sweat of their brow;” the rags
 which left some of them half naked
 persuaded me that this painful la-
 bour scarce procured them the ne-
 cessaries of life. “What reason
 “have they to complain!” said I to
 myself: “And with what eye
 “must they regard those who live
 “in ease and affluence! Us, for
 “instance, who travel under shel-
 “ter; and without labour, while
 “they are exposed to all the incle-
 “mencies of the weather.”

I WAS wholly taken up with
 these reflections, when the hour for
 the Grape-gatherers dinner arrived.

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I then saw them seat themselves in companies on the grass ; joy sparkled in their faces ; some sung, some danced, and others eat of the coarsest provisions with an appetite that rendered them more tasteful than the most costly dainties. My astonishment was visible in my countenance, and I communicated the cause to my Father.

“ You are mistaken,” said he,
 “ if you think these persons are un-
 “ happy. Enured to labour from
 “ their infancy, they are insensible
 “ to every hardship ; and notwith-
 “ standing their extreme pover-
 “ ty, they enjoy a more perfect con-
 “ tent

“tent, than they who dwell under
 “roofs of gold. Even you your-
 “self may one day be touched with
 “misfortunes to which they are
 “strangers. You may wish to
 “change your condition for theirs,
 “and envy the tranquility of mind
 “which sweetens all their labours,
 “and shelters them from the storms
 “of Life.”

“I CANNOT conceive,” said I,
 “that it is possible for me ever to
 “be in such a situation as to re-
 “gard that of these wretches with
 “envy: With no mixture of
 “ambition in my temper, and in
 “love with retirement, shall I not

“always have the peaceful enjoy-
 “ment of a private station in my
 “power?”

“AND will you be always,” said
 Mr. De Vigni, fetching a deep
 sigh, “will you be always able to
 “defend yourself from the inque-
 “tudes of Love; a passion which
 “produces the most fatal ef-
 “fects; which in a moment per-
 “verts the most pure and regular
 “desires, and makes the follies and
 “vices of the beloved object our
 “own? You have no ambition;
 “but you may sigh for one who
 “has. She desires to see you shine
 “in a more exalted station than
 “that

“that which is now the object of
“your choice ; and this dignity is
“the condition of her love. A
“desire to gratify her wishes will
“produce the same effects in your
“conduct as Ambition. What then
“will become of your tranquility
“and love of solitude ?”

“PERMIT me, Sir,” said I to
Mr. De Vigni, “to except against
“your testimony. Love has been
“the cause of your misfortunes ;
“and it is from a desire of re-
“venge only that you accuse him
“of causing all the disorders in the
“world. I confess that I am un-
“der no apprehension of its pro-

“ ducing such unhappy effects on
 “ me. I feel myself susceptible
 “ of Love ; but my Love shall al-
 “ ways have Virtue for its object ;
 “ and whatever charms I shall dis-
 “ cover in a Lady, either I shall
 “ not love her at all, or I shall cease
 “ to love the moment I see any
 “ defect which would produce a
 “ change in those principles which
 “ I have laid down as the rule of
 “ my conduct.”

“ YOUR knowledge of yourself
 “ is little,” said my Mother, “ and
 “ your knowledge of Love is less.
 “ This passion, which defeated the
 “ wisdom of the greatest Philoso-
 “ phers,

“phers, subdues us almost ere we
 “perceive its approach ; and we
 “first feel the weight of its chains
 “when they become too strong to
 “be broken. I know your heart
 “to be tender, and your security
 “will precipitate your defeat.”

“PERMIT me,” said I to my
 Mother, “to flatter myself ; I dare
 “engage for the security of my
 “heart : I am not conscious of any
 “passion equal to the tenderness
 “that I feel for you, which is the
 “effect of Instinct and Gratitude ;
 “affection for Mr. De Vigni is pro-
 “duced by a kind of sympathy,
 “and the knowledge I have of his

L 4 “merit ;

“merit; and altho’ nothing can
 “render it more ardent, yet it is
 “not an irresistible impulse which
 “would constrain to act in viola-
 “tion of my reason; nor can I per-
 “suade myself that there is any
 “species of tenderness or affection
 “distinct from what I feel for you
 “and him, which, however, makes
 “my heart free, and produces no
 “sensations but of tranquility and
 “delight: but if there is, I am
 “determined to renounce every
 “passion that is different from this
 “pleasing and virtuous compla-
 “cency.”

“I might tell you,” said my Fa-
 ther, “that you mistake Friendship
 “for

“for Love; but I leave this to ex-
 “perience; and God grant that
 “you may not find Experience to
 “be a severe instructor!”

THOUGH I made no reply to Mr.
 De la Villette, yet I was not con-
 vinced: I burned with impatience
 to assume the part I was to act in the
 World, that I might evince the truth
 of what I had advanced; and the
 four days of our journey appeared
 to me four ages.

WE arrived at Paris about three
 o'clock in the afternoon; and it
 was necessary to pass through part
 of the City to come at the place
 where

where we were to lodge. I cannot describe what passed in my mind at that perpetual motion of Men and Equipages. My soul had passed into my eyes, if I may be allowed the expression ; and I was not at leisure to reflect on the multiplicity of objects that crouded upon me at once.

DURING this astonishing passage, I did not utter one word ; and I waked as from a dream, when I was called upon to alight from the coach. I was piqued to see the eyes of our little company fixed upon me ; for I hoped to have deceived their expectations by affecting an
air

air of unconcern and tranquility: I confessed this to my Father, and joined in the mirth which they enjoyed at my expence with a good grace.

WE had many relations at Paris, with whom my Father, tho' he had carefully concealed the singularity of my education, had yet kept a literary correspondence; and my Mother had made several journies during our residence in the country, in which she cultivated their friendship. They were apprised of our arrival, and pressed to see us the next day. I have already observed, that Mr. De Vigni had taken

taken care to instruct me in the external ceremonies of a visit; and as to the rest, I was determined to be attentive to the behaviour of others; to speak little, and to note for my own instruction whatever I should hear or see. My Father declared that this was the effect of diffidence, which, however, rendered me but the more amiable. My silence was attributed to modesty; and the rather, because I had given some answers which were sensible and pertinent.

My Mother's father, at whose house she had lodged in her former journies, invited us to spend a day

with

with him. My Father consented to wait upon him after dinner, and, as it was Sunday, excused our earlier attendance, that we might have time to dress, and hear mass.

WE lodged near the Little Fathers, and repaired to that church at noon. Sensibly touched with the great Truths of Religion, I was seized with a kind of holy dread, and entered trembling into that sacred place. But what was my astonishment when I looked round on the countenances of those who filled it! I was placed behind a young lady, who was very richly dressed, and sat on a chair, playing with a nose-gay;

gay; she was furrounded by young gentlemen, who talked to her so loud, that I did not lose one word of their discourse.

“How do you dispose of yourself to-day, Madam?” said one of them. “Do you shine at the Opera? La More sings a solo there to-night.”

“FYE, my Lord,” said another. “How can you propose the Opera on a Sunday! We must leave it to-day to the citizens wives.”

“THAT is true,” replied the lady; “it is not fit that a woman
“ of

“ of fashion should appear at public
“ places, but on those days when
“ they are resorted to by people of
“ equal rank.”

“ You are in the right, Madam,”
said a young spark on the other
side; “ and if you will take my
“ advice, we will revive the party
“ of St. Cloud, which that blun-
“ dering Knight has impertinently
“ broken.”

SHE was going to reply, when, at
the sound of a bell that proclaimed
the elevation of the Host, she rose
up, and lolled over the back of a
chair; the men bent one knee, on
which

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which they placed their elbow. I then imagined I might apply myself to my devotions without interruption; but the whole company rising, the men, after looking down at the knee which they had bent, and rubbing it twenty times, began again to talk so loud, that my patience was quite exhausted. I changed place, but I gained no advantage; the same noise and the same irreverence prevailed equally in all parts of the assembly.

“AND what,” said I to myself,
“are these people Christians! No,
“doubtless, these are Pagans, whom
“curiosity has brought into our
“temple;

Temple; but I think they ought to be refused admittance, or obliged to behave with decency.

My Father, to whom I communicated my thoughts at our return, could not refrain from laughter; but my astonishment was encreased when he assured me that these people believed Jesus Christ to be present in the Temple, and professed themselves his disciples.

“It is impossible!” said I. “Can they be sensible of the Majesty of God, and of the meanness of animated dust, without being struck with the most respectable awe in his presence?”

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"LEARN," said my Mother,
 "the cause of this irregular beha-
 "viour: Children of the most
 "tender age are witnesses of the
 "want of reverence in our churches.
 "It is in vain that a Governess, or
 "a Mother, repeatedly tells them
 "that God is present; that he is a
 "God who will severely punish
 "those who treat him with disre-
 "spect: they cannot reconcile what
 "they see with that which they
 "are taught. And when this Go-
 "verness or Mother observe not
 "themselves, in the holy place, the
 "respect which they recommend to
 "their pupils, they are apt to think
 "it an imposition, and imitate
 "what they see."

"It

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“It is likely,” replied I, “they
“will act so, until they arrive at
“years of discretion; but is it not
“strange they should not then lose
“their childish habits?”

“They ought to do it,” said
my Father; “and they undoubtedly
“ly would, if they made use of
“their understanding, to search into
“the great truths of Religion: but
“their faith is too superficial to
“make any thing more than a
“light impression. Scarcely are
“they got beyond their Infancy,
“before they are made to learn by
“rote a summary of what they
“ought to know; but explained
“in so dull a manner, as to be nei-

“ther capable of enlightening the
 “understanding, or warming the
 “heart; which are only employed
 “in learning the means to make a
 “fortune, or to enjoy it agree-
 “ably.

“A YOUNG Lady,” continued he,
 “thinks her chief study ought to be,
 “how to acquire the talent of Plea-
 “sing. If she ever hears any dis-
 “course on the necessity of be-
 “coming virtuous, it chiefly con-
 “sists in representing the shame
 “and infamy with which they are
 “covered in the eyes of the World,
 “who are not so; which seems to
 “insinuate, that Vice itself will ren-
 “der them less despicable, than the
 “want of matter to conceal it. To

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“ a young Gentleman they talk of
“ the necessity of being brave ; and
“ in the same moment in which
“ they tell him, the Evangelical
“ Law ought to be the rule of his
“ actions, they teach him that the
“ suffering a known injury must
“ infallibly ruin his reputation.
“ What idea can this young man
“ conceive, in comparing this les-
“ son with the precept of the Gos-
“ pel, of turning our cheek to him
“ who smites us ? Nothing can
“ be more natural than for him to
“ look on this Commandment, and
“ consequently all the rest, as fine
“ speculations, which are not to
“ be followed, and which are not
“ raised on any reasonable foun-
“ dation.”

WE had promised my Uncle a visit; we found at his house a great deal of company, to whom my panegyric had already been made. I was charmed at the air of kindness and sincerity with which every one pressed to embrace me; and forgetting what my Father had told me, I could not help saying aside: "My countenance interests them in my favour."

BUT self-love had no long subject for applause; it was stopped by the arrival of a Lady, who came to introduce her son to Mr. De Janfon, my Uncle. This Son was an original of a most singular figure. He came from College, where it was said, he had borne

away the first prizes. As soon as he entered, there was no more conversation left for me; my Classic Emperor engaged all voices. Every folly he discovered (and some new one appeared every time he opened his mouth) they applauded. His Mother, with an air of satisfaction, hearkened to all these praises, and by an apparent modesty, in seeming to think them above his desert, added something to them.

DURING this conversation my Vanity was on the rack. What stress could I lay on the praises which they had poured on me, when they had given the same to so complea a block head? The Mother and Son took

their leave, highly delighted with their visit; and the company began to entertain each other, by turning into ridicule all the hyperbolical praises they had before bestowed upon him.

THIS was a new, but a very useful lesson for me; and taught me through life to look with contempt on that gross flattery which is often bestowed on a man at first sight. But this was not the only lesson for which I was obliged to this day's Adventure; as I shall proceed to shew.

The END of the FIRST VOLUME.